

Coon Rapids  
Enterprise  
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### 3 Great Place winners to be announced Oct 11

After months of preparation and planning, the Coon Rapids/Whiterock Great Place Planning Team presented its offer to the Great Places Citizens Advisory Board Tuesday afternoon in an effort to be designated as one of Iowa's three pilot Great Places.

Led by CRDG board members Doug Carpenter and Rachel Garst, the local team has been preparing its offer since early July, when Coon Rapids/Whiterock joined 145 other 'places' wanting to partner with the state through the Iowa Great Places initiative announced last January by Governor Tom Vilsack.

"The three pilot Great Places will be part of our learning laboratory in this first year of Great Places, during which the state will explore coordinated, focused ways to deliver technical and financial assistance to deliver powerful results," explained Department of Cultural Affairs Director Anita Walker.

Although the Coon Rapids/Whiterock offer was squeezed into a short, 60 minute presentation, the local Great Places team made good use of its time. Once the three Great Places Advisory Board members were welcomed and seated in the Coon Rapids city council chambers, the offer was introduced with a 20 minute Power Point Presentation during which time Garst, Carpenter, Charlie

Nixon, Travis Castle, Mary Jane Venteicher and Shawn Zanders briefly described elements of the Coon Rapids/Whiterock vision. Next, the three members of the Citizens Advisory Board went on a vehicular tour narrated by Rachel Garst that followed the proposed Whiterock-Town Loop Trail which goes through Coon Rapids and Whiterock Conservancy. The tour ended at the River House, where Liz Garst highlighted the objectives of Whiterock Conservancy. The offer was concluded with the release of a Red Tailed Hawk which had been rehabilitated by Kay Neumann of SOAR. Neumann was one of more than a dozen entrepreneurs and artisans who were gathered at the River House to display their products and show local support.

After delivering the Advisory Board members back to the municipal building, Doug Carpenter said he felt the board members were extremely excited and positive about the offer and Coon Rapids/Whiterock's potential as a great place.

The full Citizens Advisory Board will meet in October to review all offers and select the three pilot Great Places. The selection of the winners will be announced in Iowa City on October 11th. Local team members plan to attend.

A copy of the 80 page Coon Rapids - Whiterock offer is in the Coon Rapids Library and is available to be read there by all.





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The one hour offer presented by the Coon Rapids/Whiterock Great Places Planning Team on Tuesday culminated with the release of a Red Tailed Hawk, which had been rehabilitated by Kay Neuman of SOAR. Claire Celsi of Des Moines, one of the Great Places Citizens Advisory Board, released the bird.